



Fall Report

Pennsylvania to Congress: Protect our parks

Critical park funding stalls

Sadly, while Pennsylvanians enjoyed some of our most iconic parks this summer such as Valley Forge, the Delaware Water Gap, and Ohiopyle State Park, Congress moved to cut funding for our greatest outdoor places—here and across the nation.

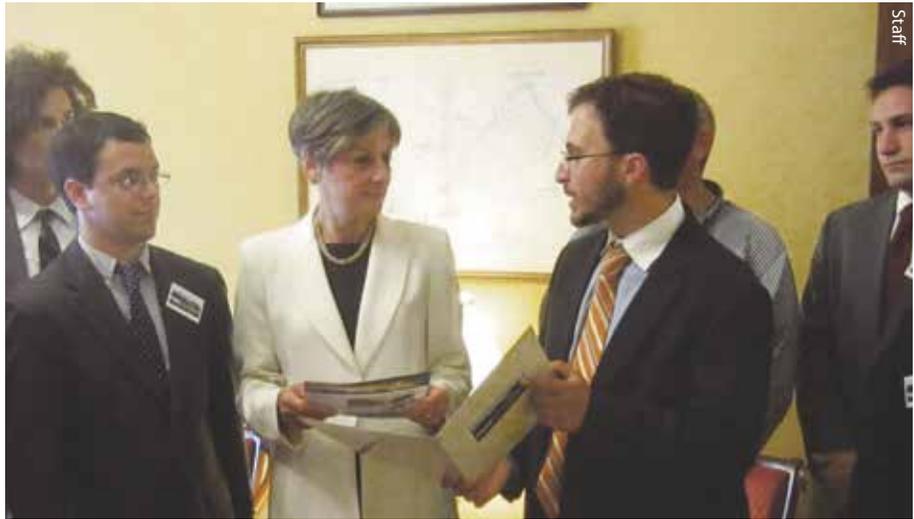
The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides critical support to national and state parks across America. Yet Congress raided the program last year—leaving parks without the resources they so desperately need. And the parks budget proposed by Congress for the upcoming year completely zeroes out the LWCF, leaving our parks more vulnerable to the effects of drilling, mining, development and pollution.

We lose when park funding is slashed

While most Pennsylvanians haven't heard of it by name, the LWCF has provided more than \$315 million over the last 50 years to Pennsylvania's state and national parks. It helped create Valley Forge, protect state parks from Ricketts Glen to Ridley Creek, and maintain recreational areas we love like the Delaware Water Gap.

Given this track record of success, it's not surprising that millions visit our parks each year. The LWCF is a critical tool for protecting our natural heritage—but that is not its only value. According to a recent report, they spend \$5.4 billion on gear, food and housing, often in our local economies.

To defend our parks, PennEnvironment launched a campaign this summer to win support for long-term funding for this critical program.



▲ PennEnvironment staff and volunteers discuss protecting Pennsylvania's parks with Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz in D.C.

Building support for our parks

We collected pictures of Pennsylvanians enjoying their favorite parks and sent tens of thousands of petitions to Congress. Our staff talked with more than 60,000 Pennsylvanians about the parks we love and how the LWCF protects them.

In mid-July, a dozen volunteers and allies went to D.C. to remind our elected officials why they care about our parks. We

met with champions like Reps. Mike Fitzpatrick (R-Bucks) and Allyson Schwartz (D-Montgomery) about the threat to our parks. And after highlighting numerous reasons people love our parks, Sen. Bob Casey signed onto legislation that would provide dedicated funding for the LWCF. PennEnvironment continues to advocate for all of Pennsylvania's members of Congress to support this important initiative and fully fund the LWCF.



Walt Hubis

take action

If shortchanged by Congress, our parks will be more vulnerable to the effects of encroaching overdevelopment, crumbling infrastructure, more pollution or drilling.

Help protect our parks. Take action on our website: www.PennEnvironment.org/action

◀ Gettysburg National Military Park



To our members

This summer was a clear reminder that when we come together, we can deliver great results for our environment.

With Congress on the verge of gutting one of the nation's crown-jewel conservation programs, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, PennEnvironment staff, members and volunteers jumped to action.

Our canvass staff talked to more than 50,000 Pennsylvanians about the threat to the LWCF, and we mobilized thousands of concerned citizens to call and email Pennsylvania's members of Congress. After thousands of emails to Sen. Bob Casey's office, and after PennEnvironment activists visited his D.C. office directly, he signed onto legislation to defend the LWCF.

Sometimes it takes more elbow grease than we'd hope, but in the end, we've seen that if we come together, we can win.

Thanks for your support.

David Masur
Director

Recent action

Victory: Lawsuit makes coal plants clean up act

As a result of a lawsuit brought by Earthjustice on behalf of PennEnvironment, the Sierra Club, and the Clean Air Council, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection the (DEP) updated and strengthened air quality permits for a group of Pennsylvania coal fired power plants.

As a response to our legal appeal, the DEP proposed and issued new permits for seven plants. Two other plants, Elrama and Armstrong, have been shuttered.

"Luckily, the authors of the Pennsylvania Air Pollution Control Act had the foresight to allow citizens to take legal action when state officials fail to act," said PennEnvironment Director David Masur. "This is a significant victory for the people of Pennsylvania, for those who suffer from asthma and other respiratory ailments, and for anyone living downwind from these facilities."

More than 400 attend hearing to save Loyalsock

More than just temperatures were on the rise this summer in Pennsylvania as concerned citizens kept the heat on Gov. Tom Corbett's efforts to open up some of the most pristine parts of Loyalsock State Forest to drilling.

Giving Pennsylvanians only 10 days' notice, the Corbett administration held a hearing on the future of Loyalsock State Forest in Williamsport in early June. Even though the hearing was held during work hours, more than 400 concerned Pennsylvanians showed up from every corner of the state to advocate for protecting these great public lands. On the heels of that hearing, PennEnvironment collected an additional 6,000 comments, again calling on Gov. Corbett to protect the Loyalsock.

Moving forward, PennEnvironment and its coalition partners will remain vigilant in their efforts to protect and preserve Loyalsock State Forest from further gas drilling.

The climate is changing – are your investments?

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▲ PennEnvironment, coalition partners, and concerned citizens line up to testify before the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation to protect Loyalsock State Forest from gas drilling.

President Obama announces historic plan to tackle global warming pollution

For years, we pushed for it and laid the groundwork. And when President Obama delivered his most detailed commitment yet to protect our children and future generations from global warming, we stood up and applauded.

President Obama announced the first nationwide climate plan that will set the limits on carbon pollution from power plants, advance energy efficiency, and increase the nation's commitment to renewable energy.

“President Obama has responded to the millions of concerned Americans that have spoken out on behalf of their communities and their families, urging him to lead on global warming,” said Adam Garber, PennEnvironment field director.

What global warming means for PA

Weeks before the announcement, PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center released a new report, “In the Path of the Storm,” highlighting the impacts of extreme weather on the commonwealth:

- Nearly nine in 10 Pennsylvanians live in communities that had a weather-related disaster in the last six years, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
- Extreme weather from Sandy, Tropical Storm Lee and Hurricane Irene led to the evacuation of more than 100,000 Pennsylvanians, power outages for millions, and hundreds of millions of dollars in damage and cleanup costs.
- 1.5 million Pennsylvanians lost power due to Superstorm Sandy.
- Pittsburgh spent \$3.6 million clearing snow, repairing roads, and restoring service after the 2010 “Snowmageddon.”

In order to show President Obama the public support for tackling global warming, PennEnvironment set out to achieve the extraordinary goal of

collecting a record number of public comments calling for global warming solutions. All told, our staff and volunteers collected more than 130,000 signatures, the single-largest set of comments of their kind in Pennsylvania history.

Time for action is running out

With time running out to respond to this threat of global warming, the president's plan contains several key components:

- A limit on carbon pollution from new and existing power plants. Currently they lack any such federal limits—despite being the largest single-source of the carbon pollution that's fueling global warming.
- New energy efficiency measures for buildings and new appliances that will cut carbon pollution by reducing our overall energy demand.
- Expanding the production of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar.

More than 3.2 million Americans submitted public comments last year in support of the president setting limits on carbon pollution from power plants, including the 130,000 collected by PennEnvironment.



more online



To learn more about our actions on global warming, visit: www.PennEnvironment.org

▲ *Flooding in State College, Pa.*



Jenne Turner

Fracking exacerbates global warming

Carbon pollution from power plants is a major contributor to global warming. PennEnvironment lauded the president when he mapped out a plan for cleaning up this pollution.

But despite praising this and other aspects of President Obama's blueprint to tackle global warming, PennEnvironment is aggressively pressing the White House to drop their support for nuclear power, so-called “clean coal,” and most notably, a call for increased fracking and gas drilling.

That's because study after study has shown that fracking releases the pollutant methane that is at a minimum 25 times as powerful as carbon dioxide. As Cornell University professor Anthony Ingraffea noted in a recent New York Times editorial, “[natural gas] is not a ‘bridge’ to a renewable energy future—it's a gangplank to more [global] warming and away from clean energy investments.”

PennEnvironment and our partners continue to push back against proposals that promote fracking, and are working towards a future that is 100 percent powered with truly clean energy sources such as wind and solar power.

(Top) PennEnvironment Advocate Erika Staaf overlooking a central Pennsylvania landscape disrupted by a drill rig.

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PennEnvironment

Our mission

We all want clean air, clean water and open spaces. But it takes independent research and tough-minded advocacy to win concrete results for our environment, especially when powerful interests stand in the way of environmental progress.

That's the idea behind PennEnvironment. We focus exclusively on protecting Pennsylvania's air, water and open spaces. We speak out and take action at the local, state and national levels to improve the quality of our environment and our lives.

Who will pay for the damage of fracking?

Oil and gas drilling has been known to contaminate water, tear up land, harm the health of nearby residents, and contribute to global warming—many of which have significant “dollars and cents” costs.

In Pennsylvania, rules are supposed to hold oil and gas companies accountable for cleaning up these damages, but a new report, “Who Pays the Cost of Fracking?,” by PennEnvironment Research & Policy Center shows that the rules often leave the public holding the bag.

The study shows that Pennsylvania's requirements are too lax, and often don't take the environmental and health costs of fracking into account. Right now, the state requires a minuscule \$4,000 to \$10,000 for clean up, while in reality, it can cost up to \$700,000 or more.

The report suggests having oil and gas production companies put up a bond of at least \$250,000 for plugging and reclaiming wells, plus \$5 million for damage to private property, health or environmental clean up. To read the full report visit our website at: www.PennEnvironmentCenter.org.



Fracking hits home

◀ PennEnvironment joins “Gasland” creator Josh Fox (center, glasses) to release his newest film “Gasland II” and educate thousands of Pennsylvanians about the threats of fracking.